

## 40th Division made its mark during Korean War

The 40th Infantry Division's march to battle in the Korean Conflict actually started five years earlier at the end of World War II. After fighting long and hard in the Pacific Theater, the Division was designated as one of the organizations to spearhead the invasion of Japan (Operation OLYMPIC), scheduled for November 1945.

As General MacArthur's spearhead, it was expected to receive a high-level of casualties, so it trained even harder to be ready for this task. However, after the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan, they soon surrendered on 15 August 1945. Other than returning home, the 40th Infantry Division volunteered to free Korea from 40 years of occupation by Imperial Japan, and to help establish a democratic government.

Over a month after World War II officially ended (3 March 1946), the 40th Infantry Division, California National Guard, returned to California and finally demobilized on 7 April 1946 at Camp Stoneman, Pittsburg, California [near San Francisco, Former Guardsmen of the 40th Infantry Division soon reformed their units.

In January 1950, to the world's surprise, Taiwan and South Korea were not included in President Truman's Administration announced "The American Pacific Defense Perimeter". In March, in addition to the North's increasing border attacks, they sent guerrilla units into the South's territory.

Before daybreak, on a rainy Sunday morning, at 0400 hours, 25 June 1950, the Korean Civil War officially started. When the communist North Korea invaded democratic South Korea with over nine reinforced infantry divisions, an armored brigade (est. 125 tanks), over 9,000 pieces of heavy artillery, gunboats, aircraft, 30,000 partisans-guerrilla's, spies, Soviet and Communist Chinese advisors. The North's army was soon decimating the South's seven newly formed infantry divisions. The Communists summarily exterminated civilian officials, politicians, teachers, civil servants, landowners, and captured officers in the Democratic South. By midday of the 26th, the South's total decimation was expected within days; but they continued to heroically fight, with the assistance of the American advisors.

The morning of 27 June 1950 [Washington], President Truman ordered the Air Force and Navy to help repulse the invaders. He then ordered General MacArthur (the Commander in Chief, Far East Command and Military Commander of Japan) to send ground forces into Korea. On 29 June, Detachment "X", 507th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion, arrived at Suwon and started shooting down communist planes.

On 1 July, the ill-fated "TASK FORCE SMITH" arrived at Pusan to help buy time

until a formidable force could be moved from the occupation forces in Japan. On 7 July the United Nations Security Council approved supplying troops under the United Nations Flag, and under a unified command headed by the United States to repulse the invading North Koreans. On 8 July, General MacArthur was also designated the Commanding General of United Nation Forces operating in Korea.

By 10 July, the 24th Infantry Division had been deployed from Japan into the main line of defense along the Kum River. By 17 July, the main line of defense had been totally broken by the North Koreans; and by mid-August the 1st Cavalry Division, 24th and 25th Infantry Divisions, and remaining South Korean Army were defending the tenuous Pusan Perimeter. The Republic of Korea President Syngman Rhee turned over complete command and control (responsibility) of the Korean Army (ROKA) to General MacArthur.

While President Truman was ordering the military to help, he asked Congress to authorize the mobilization of several States' National Guard units. Congress set the period of Active Duty Service for both the Guardsmen and National Guard Units not to exceed 12 months, unless a "Declaration of War" was approved. [The period of mobilization was later increased to 21 months.]

At the start of the National Guard mobilizations, the Army was using Guardsmen as individual replacements and replacing their leadership with regulars. The Guardsmen successfully urged their elected representatives to discontinue this practice. The "combat veteran" Guardsmen wanted to serve as they did many times before- but they wanted to go as a unit, with their own leadership and not as individuals. An example is when the 7-6th Anti-aircraft Artillery (1 20mm Gun) Battalion, San Diego, California, They were called to duty on 15 July, and most of its Guardsmen were sent as individual replacements directly into Korea. Soon Congress and President Truman (a Guardsmen himself-ordered the practice stopped, and required Guardsmen to serve in their own units, and with their own leadership.

A few days before Annual Training in July 1950, the 40th Infantry Division received a secret alert for mobilization. On 10 August 1950, the Division was inducted into federal service, and at noon on 1 September 1950, every Guardsman in the Division mobilized at their armories. There were no AWOLs, and most units spent the previous night at their armories. Again, in defense of the nation, California Guardsmen were leaving their families, friends, homes, schools, businesses, careers, factories, and farms. Soon the 40th infantry Division ["Fighting 40th"] moved to

its new home at the abandoned Camp Cooke, Santa Maria, California (now Vandenberg Air Force Base) to conduct Advance Combat Training, reception and training of inductees and reservists.

Between 25 January - 1 April 1951, General MacArthur launched a series of counter offensives to push the Communists back of the 38th Parallel and to free Seoul (Operations THUNDERBOLT, KILLER, ROUNDUP, RIPPER, RUGGED, AND DAUNTLESS). By 25 March, the American and South Korean forces had recaptured Seoul (second time); established a main line of defense in the vicinity of the 38th parallel; and still had the tactical initiative. The badly beaten Communists were on defensive and regrouping. However, Washington had ordered American forces to stop at the 38th Parallel.

General MacArthur increasingly made public his beliefs that the conflict could not be won without the total destruction of all communist forces to China's border and the need to strategically prohibit Communist China from assisting North Korea. He specifically wanted to blockade the Mainland China coast, and to bomb weapon plants, the bridges along the Yalu River, airfields, supply dumps, and troop staging areas.

He further wanted General Kai-shek's National (free) Chinese army in Taiwan to be allowed into the Korean fray to be able to continue the attack into China. This increased the enormous political pressure back home on President Truman who openly rebuffed MacArthur's desires to expand the conflict, fearing it would start World War III.

In Korea, on 11 April 1951, after learning of General MacArthur's relief, the Communist Chinese stopped defensive actions, then launched an all-out counter offensive that lasted until 1 May; then after a brief rest and resupply they continued the attack on 17-28 May. The Eighth Army effectively stopped the attack, then conducted Operation DETONATE, forcing the Communist Chinese to give up most of its gains, retaking Seoul (third time), and reestablishing Phase Line Kansas north of the 38 Parallel on 8 June. The conflict then bogged down into the "Battle of the Hills". The stalemated battles, primarily in the Iron Triangle and Punch Bowl regions, were generally balanced in the Americans' favor. Russian and American jet fighters fought overhead in "MIG Alley".

The 40th Infantry Division continued with its aggressive and extensive Advance Combat, Air movement, and Amphibious Landing Training in Japan. The leaders, soldiers, and their families often received conflicting information from the government. One minute they were to prepare for possible

deployment into Korea and the next minute they were going to be returned home early, and they would not go to Korea because they were no longer needed in any role. This conflicting information created much consternation among families, employers, and politicians at home the Guardsmen took great pride when they were given the nickname and called "Flaming Assholes".

This was in reference to their Division's patch, their unflinching tenacity, lack of tolerance of incompetence, and demand to be treated with soldierly respect. This is when the Division's most tenacious Guardsmen started stitching a red thread into the center of the sunburst to represent a "flame". [Several other versions of unauthorized patches stitched with a red ball, burst, or circle, on the inside of the sunburst where purchased by some in Japan and/or while fighting in Korea. However, most wore the official patch that remained "officially" unchanged as it was approved back in World War I; a golden yellow sunburst on a royal blue diamond field.]

Also while in Japan the Division's Guardsmen donated (built) a Church in Matsushima (a remote village), and accomplished numerous other humanitarian deeds.

In June 1951, Radio Peiping announced "... 5 Chinese and 1 North Korean Divisions, were waiting for the 40th at Wonson" - On 10 July, the first Armistice talks began, and many at home were led to believe the conflict would soon be over. On 22 August, the Eighth Army launched a series of limited operations to secure key-terrain.

But on 1 September 1951, one year after the 40th Infantry Division was mobilized, the reconstituted North Korean and much-expanded Communist Chinese armies (over 1 million men) launched a massive offensive, to destroy the Eighth Army, but it was soon forced to cease the offensive and assume the defense. After two months of the most savage fighting yet, the Communists were badly mauled, made no gains, were forced to retire and assume defensive posture.

The stalemated battle lines returned, with the Eighth Army gaining four miles, most of it objectives, key-terrain, and remaining along the 38th parallel. However, this came at a very high price to those brave divisions that have been fighting non-stop since the conflict beginning. The Communist Chinese offensive and the sustained high intensity operations left some of the forces in Korea in a tenuous state of readiness. The 1st Cavalry Division assigned to I Corps, and 24th Infantry Division assigned to IX Corps, had been put through the "Meat Grinder" once too many times and identified to be replaced. On 31 October, the 1st Cavalry Division was moved to the rear and rotated to Japan,

During the Fall and Winter 1951/2, the political activities (rhetoric) for the next President of the United States were beginning. President Truman was receiving a lot of political heat over the conflict's prosecution. The increasing public feeling was to "Win It or End It"! Candidate Truman was giving the electorate the that the war would impression. soon be over, and the Guardsmen would be returning home, to their neglected farms, businesses, and families. The 40th Division was soon coming to the end of their 21 - months call-up period. The President had made no calls for a "Declaration of War" which would extend their service to the nation. During the same period, newspapers in California were quoting government officials that the Chwapa-e-Ri Sector from the 24th Infantry Division. Without hesitation and before night had fallen, the Division established a Tactical Headquarters, and started assuming control of the Battle Area from the 24th Infantry Division Headquarters.

This was part of a much larger, very secret Army plan, to keep tactical weaknesses from the Communist Forces and spy networks. In Korea, the 24th Infantry Division's regiments were left fighting on the front lines. In Japan, the 40th Infantry Division, California Army National Guard, and the 45th Infantry Division, Oklahoma Army National Guard was both ordered to move into Korea. The 45th Infantry Division openly moved from Japan with all its equipment to rear assembly areas near Pusan, Korea, prior to moving to the front as part of I Corps; to replace the 1st Cavalry Division that was already in Japan. An obvious logical action by the American Army, since it had a widely known in-country strength ceiling placed upon it by Washington and the United Nations. At the same time, the 40th Infantry Division, moving stealthily from Japan [mostly at night] with maximum operational security, arriving at Inchon, Korea; then moved into the front battle lines relieving the 24th Infantry Division's troops. This was so skillfully done, that the 40th Division was solidly in position in the front lines fighting before the Communist Forces and many "GIs" in Korea and Japan even realized either division was gone (switched).

On 27 December 1951, the "Limited Armistice-Cease Fire" ended. Elements of the Division had been arriving in Korea since 26 December, however a large number arrived in two echelons on 11 and 22 January 1952. Under the cover of cold darkness, units moved from debarkation site and airfields at Inchon, to forward assembly areas, directly



into battle positions, while under pressure of the enemy.

The 40th Division was surprised and saddened as to the shape of the 24th Division; worn-out soldier's, lack of acceptable supplies, non-operational weapons, and equipment. Vehicles were left and cannibalized where they broke-down. The equipment, radios, and weapons were abandoned in piles, much like a retreating Army.

Field sanitation and security was deplorable. Upon beginning assuming control of the battle area on 26 December, and before the arrival of the second echelon, the Division's Guardsmen were fighting. The first casualty occurred on 20 January, when SFC Kenneth Kaiser Jr., of 160th Infantry, Los Angeles, was killed by communist mortar fire. Although fighting on the front lines since 26 December 1951, the Division was not officially reassigned from Japan to the Eighth Army, Korea, until 22 January and not officially "announced" until 8 February in keeping with the deception. To confuse the Communists even more and to discourage any tribulations in the sector, the 45th Infantry Division was briefly attached to the IX Corps during January. Also as part of the deception, the 24th Infantry Division, was not officially announced as reassigned [moved] into Japan until the very end of February; thus giving China caution as they tried to find it.

During January and February 1952, the Communists increased the number of patrols and reconnaissance in force actions trying to figure out what was going on. The Eighth Army capitalized on their curiosity, when 1016 February, "Operation CLAM-UP" started; all activities ceased along battle area to lure the Communist patrols close to the front lines so that they could be cut off and captured.

On 1 March 1952, the 40th Division had been successfully defending the IX Corps' "Center-Right" (Kumwha) Sector effectively since 26 December. It was known that the units must be afforded time and resources to get the equipment and weapons operational that they received from the 24th Division, or receive a new issue. To the surprise of many, even in combat, the "bean-counters" still wanted accountability of this stuff, and commanders to sign for it. Hence, the Division implemented an "Operation Get Well" where the units would be rotated to forward assembly areas behind the front to conduct extensive maintenance, reissue, cross leveling, and accountability activities. The 40th Infantry Division received incremental attachment of three regiments from the 6th (ROKA) Division between 2229 March- they were moved into the front lines relieving the Division's Regiments. On 30 March, the 6th (ROKA) Division~ relieved the 40th Infantry Division of the Kumwha Sector. Then on 31 March, the 2nd (US) Infantry Division relieved the 6th (ROKA) Division of the Kumwha Sector. On 1 April 1952, the 40th Division relieved the 2nd (ROKA) Division on the IX Corps' "Far-Right" (Kumwha-Kum song) Sector. Then 3 to 6 April, the Division effected a boundary change then relieved (assumed responsibility) the 2nd (US) Infantry Division's sector, which was previously held by the 40th Division during March. The 40th Infantry Division was now defending an area on the front lines, which was previously defended by two divisions. While the Division defended, it also conducted nuclear weapons.

On 30 June 1952, the 40th Infantry Division was relieved by the 2nd (ROKA) and 24th (ROKA) Divisions, designated as IX Corps reserves, and moved to Field Training Command #5, where it was also tasked with support and security missions. (Whenever the tactical situation allowed, divisions on the front combat lines for a six-month period were rotated to the rear to rest, train replacements, and resupply.) The Division Artillery, 140th Antiaircraft Artillery (A"(SP) Battalion and 140th Tank Battalion remained in forward combat positions, attached to IX Corps, and in direct support of the 2nd (ROKA) and 24th (ROKA) Divisions. On 13 July, the Division moved near Kapyong, still designated as IX Corps reserves, training, providing logistical support and security missions. This is when the Division's Guardsmen started the "SFC Kenneth Kaiser Jr. High School" at Kapyong, which was later dedicated on 18 October.

On 2 September 1952, twenty-four-months after their mobilization, Guardsmen

and their assigned units of the 40th Infantry Division, National Guards United States [NGUS] was federally recognized in California; while the 40th Infantry Division, "California Army National Guard", continued fighting in Korea. It became obvious that the National Guard organizations were still needed on active duty and these units would soon exceed the 21 months Congress authorized for their call-up into Federal service. The State Governors and Congress were not willing to extend the Guardsmen's mobilization past 24 months without a "Declaration of War". Many noted that it would not be smart to pull units out of the battle lines in Korea. Therefore, Congress passed legislation, requiring mobilized National Guardsmen called into federal service to be released before 24 months expired, and returned to their State's control. They then fixed the maximum federal service for National Guard Units (organizations) at five years. Congress prohibited the President by statute from appropriating the National Guard units into the regular army. They were to remain State National Guard Units serving on active duty. For those National Guard units that could not be immediately returned to their State, Congress authorized temporary analogous parallel National Guard units. These units were to meet the long held legal requirements of returning Guardsmen and their units to the communities where inducted. These units would bear the same designations, organizations, and authorizations as those retained on active service, with only the addition of "[NGUS]" or "National Guards United States" after their designations, while organizations remaining on active duty would still list their State; such as California Army National Guard. The State's [NGUS] organizations were formed upon Guardsmen returning from active duty, but they were not fully Federally Recognized until 24-months after their mobilization, and only if the actual unit had not been returned to the State's control. The [NGUS] authorizations were to be withdrawn on the date the corresponding unit was demobilized or by a "Declaration of War", when in either case the two units were to be combined into one organization.

On 22 October 1952, the 40th Infantry Division was assigned to the X Corps, and moved back into the front lines completing relief of the 25th Infantry Division in the Corps' "Center" (Paem-lhyon-Ni) Sector. The Division defended from Heartbreak Ridge to the Punch Bowl. Trying to exploit the relief, at midnight the Communists' bugles signaled attack along the Division's front that lasted every night from 22-25 October. Then again, on 34 November, they launched another offensive along the entire front. This time its main effort was focused at Heartbreak Ridge (Hill 851) to the adjacent Mundung-ni Valley, on the Division's "Left" Sector in the 160th Infantry Regiment's area. The Division held fast and repelled the foe time-and-again. The Communists' operations then reduced into smaller units attacking outposts and key-bunkers along the front.

On 30 January 1953, the 45th Infantry Division (Oklahoma Army National Guard) relieved the 40th Infantry both the Americans and South Koreans. On 1 June, the Communist Chinese launched an offensive with its main effort in the area of X Corps' "Right" Sector, where the 12th (ROKA) Division was defending adjacent to the right of the 40th Infantry Division, The 140th Tank Battalion, while in direct support of the 12th (ROKA) Division, tenaciously defended strategic hills near Naejonp-Yong (1 -8 June and 16-18 July), which were key to the Corps' defense. Because of the heroism of the Battalion, it was awarded the "Presidential Distinguished Unit Citation" for single-handedly breaking an attacking infantry division that became completely demoralized and ceased to be an effective striking force.

During July 1953, the Communist Forces launched their final offensive along the entire front to seize key terrain to improve their final front lines before the Armistice. These battles were some of the bloodiest yet. On 2 July, they launched attacks against outposts guarding approaches to the Eighth Army's main line of defense.

On 6 July, the Communists launched attacks on Pork Chop Hill, and several other key-defenses. Then on 11 July, the 40th Infantry Division (California National Guard) quickly moved, under heavy enemy pressure, and relieved the 45th Infantry Division (Oklahoma National Guard) on Heartbreak Ridge and Sandbag Castle, on the X Corps' "Center-Left" from Paem to west of lhyon-Ni.

On 20 July, since the Armistice would be soon signed, the Eighth Army was ordered to stop the offensive [due to the projected high level of casualties], and to establish a new main line of resistance. The Communist Chinese and North Korean Forces lost over 75,000 soldiers or eight divisions during the offensive.

At 1000 hours, 27 July 1953, Lieutenant General Harrison and Lieutenant General Nam 11 Jr. signed the Armistice Agreement at Panmunjom ending hostilities at 20:00 hours. At "exactly" 20:00 hours, the fighting stopped along the entire front.

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